



Alberta Cancer
Board

Butting In

Tobacco Control Update

from the Division of Epidemiology, Prevention and Screening

"Excuse me, but here's something that might interest you..."

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Here's what's in it for you

Welcome to the first edition of "Butting In", a tobacco update newsletter designed to provide the latest information about Alberta's number one preventable cause of death.

Despite the considerable advances made in the province through increased taxes and numerous municipal bylaws, tobacco still claims the lives of 3,400 Albertans every year.

Did you know?

Nearly 10 Albertans die
every day from tobacco-related causes!

Articles for "Butting In" will be based on evidence published in leading scientific journals and newspapers and taken from the pages of the tobacco industry's own documents. Sources of information for all articles will be noted at the end of each piece.

The Alberta Cancer Board (ACB) strives to conquer cancer through research, prevention, treatment and care. Because tobacco use is a primary cause of cancer, the ACB is providing this bimonthly publication for those interested in keeping abreast of developments in all areas of tobacco.

For more information about "Butting In" or about the Alberta Cancer Board, phone (403) 944-4888 or e-mail prevention@cancerboard.ab.ca.

Secondhand smoke is deadly

Approximately 350 non-smokers die each year in Canada from secondhand smoke-related lung cancer, and 3,400 more die from secondhand smoke-related heart disease.

About 19% of Alberta children under the age of 12 and 27% of Alberta youth between 12 and 17 years are regularly exposed to secondhand smoke in their homes.

Secondhand smoke, also known as Environmental Tobacco Smoke or ETS, is a complex mixture of gas and chemicals generated during the burning and smoking of tobacco products. To date, more than 50 compounds in tobacco smoke have been identified as carcinogens and six as developmental or reproductive toxicants.

Two-thirds of the smoke from a burning cigarette is not inhaled by the smoker, but goes into the surrounding environment. ETS contains twice as much nicotine and tar as the smoke that smokers inhale. It also has five times the carbon monoxide, which decreases the amount of oxygen in the blood.

Research has shown that non-smokers absorb some of the toxic chemicals and carcinogens from ETS, and traces of these toxins have been found in the blood, urine, saliva and breast milk of non-smokers, even after limited exposure. People who are regularly exposed to ETS are at increased risk of developing secondhand smoke-related health problems.

According to Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada, a bartender working in a smoke-filled room inhales the equivalent of 37 cigarettes worth of secondhand smoke in one eight-hour shift.

Source: Tobacco Basics Handbook, 2002 Edition, AADAC

Can 10 million doctors all be wrong?

Ten million doctors believe all governments need to take action to reduce the death toll caused by the use of tobacco products.

"Tobacco Under The Microscope: The Doctors' Manifesto For Global Tobacco Control" was released last October by 130 organizations representing 10 million doctors in 117 countries.

In the Manifesto, doctors call on all governments—local, provincial and federal—to take decisive action to prevent at least some of the estimated five million deaths that will be caused by tobacco in the next 12 months.

The Manifesto asked governments to ensure that the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control includes measures to

- ✓ include a clear, informative health warning on every packet of tobacco,
- ✓ end misleading claims that some cigarettes are safer than others,
- ✓ increase tobacco taxes,
- ✓ end all tobacco advertising, and
- ✓ protect non-smokers from tobacco smoke.

Source: a news release from Sinéad Jones - 07789861870 and Helen Frew - 07967754361. For more information on the Tobacco Control Resource Centre, visit <http://www.tobacco-control.org/>

Did you know?

Researchers estimate that the global death rate will rise to 10 million per year within 30 to 40 years.

Quebec casinos to clear the air

One of Quebec's bastions of smoking is butting out.

As of July 1, 2003, Quebec's casinos will be smoke-free. That means smokers at Gatineau's Casino du Lac-Leamy will have to leave the slot machines and gaming tables to light up. Still, the casino will provide four lounges where smokers can recline and inhale. It's a move prompted by the customers, says spokesperson Catherine Schellenberg.

"A lot of our tourists are non-smoking, more and more, increasingly so. And so this is, I think, going to be very popular among our customers. It's also a measure that will be very well received by our employees," says Schellenberg.

Schellenberg says patrons who smoke will be able to reserve slot machines and spots at tables, so they won't lose their place while they have their cigarette. By law, Quebec's casinos must provide a smoke-free environment for 40 per cent of their space. Schellenberg says, "We are simply going beyond that." Loto-Québec says the policy will make it among the few casinos in North America to offer a smoke-free environment.

Source: CBC News, <http://ottawa.cbc.ca/>

Corporate Corner

Did tobacco manufacturers know that tobacco causes lung cancer? If they did, how long ago were they discussing it?

Ms. Anne Landman, of the American Lung Association, has been reviewing the stacks of industry documents that were turned over to the public as part of the Master Settlement Agreement in the United States.

The following quote is from a "strictly confidential" 1969 document wherein the speaker expresses the tobacco industry's viewpoint about the importance of the number of people who are dying from cigarette use:

"The vital statistics I would like you to bear in mind are 7, 57, 139 and 227. ... There is no glamour about these figures. They are the death rates per 100,000 per year from cancer of the lung of

- men who were nonsmokers (they are the 7);
- men who smoked 1-4 cigarettes daily (they are the 57);
- men who smoked 15-24 cigarettes daily (they are the 139);
- and men who smoked 25 or more cigarettes daily (they are the 227).

Did you know?

Philip Morris executives were aware of the link between tobacco use and lung cancer deaths and the deadly effects of secondhand smoke as early as 1969.

Philip Morris is one of the world's largest tobacco companies.

"These four vital statistics are basically the reason why we are here tonight. They are the reason why the tobacco manufacturers in this country have spent over \$25 million to date on smoking and health research... These vital statistics are really vital: They threaten the life of the tobacco industry in every country of the world."

This document was found in the files of Helmut Wakeham, Philip Morris Research and Development Director.

Source: Philip Morris, Document Date: 20 Jun 1969

URL: <http://tobaccodocuments.org/landman/139537.html>

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